The Group of the Roaring Waterfall:
Researching the Narutaki gumi filmmaking collaborations (1934–1937)

Iris Haukamp

「鳴滝組」は、京都の鳴滝地区を拠点とし、活動した、8人の若手監督と脚本家から成る脚本家集団である。1934年の設立から1938年の解散まで、22本の時代劇脚本を書いたり、撮影したりした。多くのメンバーは、戦後も映画を作り続け、日本の映画界の重鎮となった。本プロジェクトは、今後の段階で検討するように、鳴滝組によるジャンルの革新は、今日に至るまで日本映画の制作におけるテーマの関心、スタイル、美学に影響を与え続けている。

本稿は、日本の文化遺産と世界映画史の一部として鳴滝組の活動の再発見を目的とした長期研究プロジェクトの最初の成果を含まれている。現在までの研究状況、グループの歴史的および議論的な文脈化、ならびに共同映画制作の概念の枠組みを提示する。こうした背景において、すべての「鳴滝組映画」への注釈付きフィルモグラフィーと、映画製作者と俳優の間の重要な相互作用についての考察を続ける。

【Keywords】 Narutaki gumi, scriptwriting, film, collaboration, jidaigeki, chanbara
鳴滝組、脚本、映画、合作、時代劇、チャンバラ

This long-term research project aims at recovering the activities of the 'Narutaki gumi' (鳴滝組) scriptwriting collective as a part of Japan's cultural history and heritage.[1] Based in and named after Kyoto's Narutaki neighbourhood (Ukyō-ku ward, Narutaki Doyama-chō), the Narutaki gumi was active between 1934 and 1938, and consisted of eight screenwriters and directors with affiliations to different studios: Inagaki Hiroshi, Yamanaka Sadao, Takizawa Eisuke, Fujii Shigeji, Hagiwara Ryō, Yahiro Fuji (Shinkō), Mimura Shintarō, and Suzuki Momosaku.[2] Under the nom de plume 'Kajiwara Kinpachi'(梶原金八), they redefined the extremely popular genre of *jidaigeki* (period films) and brought contemporary aesthetic sensibilities, representational styles, and concerns into their representations of the past. Various of their twenty-two screenplays were very successful at the time; Yamanaka's humanist masterpiece *Humanity and Paper Balloons* (Ninjō kami fusen, 1937) has since moved to canonical status. Kajiwara disappeared from the scenes and screens in 1938, coinciding with the outbreak of war in China, the clampdown on artistic production in accordance with wartime requirements, and key member Yamanaka's untimely death in a Chinese field hospital.

However, rather than foreclosing the discussion with the foreseeable demise of Taishō democracy and flourishing art in the darkness of early Shōwa's 'Dark Valley' (*kuro tani*), the very energy and spirit the group displayed in their reformation of the jidaigeki genre deserves attention. Straddling not only a threshold between two political systems, but also the ground-breaking transition from silents to talkies that shook the industry in many parts of the world, the group were part of a crucial piece of Japanese and global (film) history. Their scripts, partly written for the Zenshin-za progressive theatre troupe's naturalistic acting and introducing modern language and dialects into period settings, broke with traditional representations of — and ideas about — the past. Most of the members continued making films after 1938, and their influence can possibly be seen in Mifune Toshirō's realistic style of samurai-acting, the prosaic realism inherent in Yamada Yōji's 'everyday-man samurai series', beginning with his 2002 *Twilight Samurai* (Tasogare

[1] I am grateful for the support of this work provided by JSPS KAKENHI Grant Number 18H05628 and 19K2082 (Any opinions, findings, and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this material are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily reflect the views of the author(s)'organization, JSPS or MEXT).
I would also like to thank my research assistant, Zheng Ying, for her excellent, meticulous work.
[2] For Japanese personal names, I have used the Japanese order of surname and given name. I have excluded the macrons, indicating long vowels, from well-known place-names such as Kyoto, Osaka and Tokyo. Translations are my own unless otherwise stated.

Seibei), or even the tongue-in cheek, humorous approach to past events and people seen for instance in *Samurai Shifters* (Hikkoshi daimyō, 2019), which also clearly deals with the very contemporary concern of relocating for work in Japan's salaryman work culture.

Filmmaking collectives are neither exclusive to Japan nor to the period under scrutiny (e.g. the Proletarian Film Movement, the Dziga Vertov Group or the Ogawa Pro collective in the 1960s), and they are often connected to political or aesthetic movements, such as Pro Kino, or New Realism in Japan and beyond, Cine-Liberté in France, or the Chinese Left-Wing Film Movement. Collaborative filmmaking as a global phenomenon, often has a political objective. Focussing on the specific local inflection of this trend, the research applies film-historical methods as well as film and discourse analysis to ask what the Narutaki group's concerns were and to thereby contextualise the members and their output within the fluctuating cultural discourse of their time. Furthermore, the impact of their work on subsequent permutations of the genre and Japanese film culture will be elucidated. Finally, the research will expand beyond the immediate members of the group and towards other persons, such as specific actors or affiliates participating in the films or discussions, keeping in mind that collaborative filmmaking involves all parts of the process.

Over the past two decades, research on Japanese film — domestic and overseas — has been largely moving away from the previous mainly auteurist approaches or those centred around 'canonical films', and towards a more comprehensive, contextual understanding of the work, their authors, and the location of both within the discourse of their time. At the same time, an increasing interest in so far underexplored filmmakers becomes evident. The proposed research contributes to this more general trend, but differentiates itself by taking into consideration the specificity of the collective, the important role of intellectual exchange within and beyond the film world, and tracing the group's influence on (Japanese) film beyond the narrow timeframe of their existence. As the Narutaki group was also dedicated to the study of film as an object, the members commented on the matter in more general, film theoretical terms. Until recently, domestic as well as international publications on Japanese film that incorporate film theory into their argument, as well as curated film theory readers, very rarely mention Japanese film theorists. The very existence of early film theory in Japan was a matter of debate, also because the dividing lines between practitioner, critic, and theorist are intriguingly far from clear-cut. The prolificacy of pre-war film theory has very recently been demonstrated by Gerow, Nornes and Iwasaki's long-anticipated *Nihon senzen eigaronshū: eigariron no saihakken* (Yumani, 2018.) This research project contributes to the book's exploding of Westerncentric conceptions about film theory and provides a connection between theory and practice by examining the mutual influences of theoretical ideas and the films and scripts created within the Narutaki group.

With Japanese film being increasingly recognised as a cultural asset and heritage, as most recently seen with the establishment of the National Film Archive Japan (NFAJ) in April 2018, the Japanese film industry's output over the past one-hundred and twenty years has once more come into the spotlight. Moving away from the previous fixation on 'classical' works and their directors, as recognised by the West, such as Kurosawa's *Rashōmon* (1950), or *Tokyo Story* (Ozu, 1953), scholarly work increasingly has come to consider films within their historical context, and also to include lesser-known and pre-war works. However, possibly also due to many historical films being lost — it is assumed that less than twenty percent of Japanese films made prior to 1946 are lost — there is still a tendency to focus on individual, and more prominent filmmakers. As of today, there is no dedicated work on the Narutaki gumi in English or Japanese. Various works mention it in passing with regard to the stylistic innovations within jidaigeki (e.g. Aoki 1999: 131−132; Richie 2005: 71; Thornton 2008: 45, 115, 185, Yoshimoto 2000: 392). However, these references are sparse and overwhelmingly in context with two of their most prominent members, Inagaki Hiroshi and Yamanaka Sadao (see Inagaki 1983; Sugibayashi 2003: 17−39; Yamamoto 1980: 33−40). It is noteworthy in this respect that the group is ignored in Sharp's otherwise exhaustive *Historical Dictionary of Japanese Cinema* (2011). This oversight is significant precisely because the Narutaki gumi provided a nodal point in which the talents and idiosyncrasies of some of the most prominent film people of their time converged across industrial lines, interacted, and influenced each other. Interestingly, in 2014, the Period Drama Special Channel (*Jidai geki senmon channeru*) produced a sixty-minute drama, which demonstrates renewed interest in the group and its time. This research projects hopes to bring into scholarly and public consciousness the hitherto neglected work of this prolific group of filmmakers, not only locating it within cultural, industrial, and socio-political history, but also paying due attention to the cross-fertilisation of artistic and intellectual

styles and concerns possible within a professional filmmaking cooperative. In order to understand the Narutaki gumi's specificity and constitutive role in Japanese film history, this research project asks the following questions:

1. How can the Narutaki gumi and their work be categorised?
2. What was the group's objective with regard to their collective?
3. What effect in terms of group synergy can be seen in their work?
4. Which aesthetic, intellectual, political movements did they interact with and how?
5. What is their legacy to film and film discourse in Japan and ,possibly, abroad?

Finally, the project locates and assembles sources and ephemera related to the Narutaki-gumi (so far, over 350 articles and books as well as twenty screenplays and fifteen films have been collected) and aims at establishing a Narutaki-gumi digital archive.

Establishing contexts

The 1930s were a tumultuous time in Japan as in many other parts of the world. Times were changing, and they had been changing for a while. The early Shōwa Period saw the pendulum of discursive and 'real world' trends — cultural, social, political, economic — swinging once more towards the sombre, nationalist spectrum. On the other hand, especially the first half of the decade still provided the space and the energy for experiments in cultural expression originating in the previous — more liberal — Taishō Period and coming to fruition shortly before the increasing conservative-militarist backlash following the annexation of Manchuria (1931/1932) began dictating content and form and suffocating aberrant utterances. When General Araki Sadao appeared as a talking head in the Army-sponsored part-documentary, part narrative film *Crisis Time Japan* (Hijōji Nippon, 1933 Kondō Iyokichi), he justified the 'Imperial Way' (*kodo-ha*) of his eponymous section within the Imperial Army through the crisis Japan was facing at home and abroad (High 2003: 47−8). Supposed to garner support and funding for the military, the film was later used as evidence at the Tokyo War Crimes Trials. In 1933, it not only spawned a catchy song (in line with Japan's very early media mix culture), but also instances of resistance displayed through one of the popular "What time is it" (*ima nanji*) jokes: "What time is it? Crisis time" (*Ima nanji*? *hijōji*).[3]

The sarcasm in this response is a common reaction to times getting darker (similar reactions can be observed in the context of Germany's 'Third Reich', for instance), not only with regard to war, but also concerning the very real economic downturn within the maelstrom of the world economic crisis, manifesting in the Shōwa Depression of 1930-1932. And indeed, returning to the realm of film, various directors and scriptwriters represent this mood in their works, in a significant shift from their earlier offerings. These people, as well as their films, were coming of the age in the 1930s, and their work reflects the conditions under which this change occurred. This environment and the filmmakers' engagement with it fostered the nuanced approaches to lived reality in many films produced at the time, and together with technological advancements and stylistic experimentation explains why, despite the increasing state control, this time is considered to be the first golden age of Japanese cinema.

One such, and likely to most famous, instance of a director's thematic and stylistic maturing during the time under consideration is Ozu Yasujirō (1903−1963), whose student comedies, such as *Dreams of Youth* (Wakado no Yume, 1931) or *Days of Youth* (Gakusei romansu: wakaki hi, 1929), turned sombre with the change of the decade, depicting the new middle class (the students of his former film) struggling to make ends meet despite their university degrees. Ozu's work for the Shōchiku Kamata Studio's trademark film genre about this very new middle-class, *shoshimin geki*, initiated by studio head Kido Shirō, from *Tokyo Chorus* (Tokyo no kōrasu, 1931) to *University is a Nice Place* (Daigaku yoi toko, 1936), all used the aesthetics of modern Tokyo to express the new times, but 'Tokyo - City of the Unemployed' (an intertitle from *Tokyo Chorus*) looks decidedly less shiny and hopeful than a few years earlier. According to Standish, in these films the metropole had become the 'mise-en-scène of modernity in all its negative aspects' (2005: 42), but they did keep some of the more light-hearted touches of their predecessors. *I Was Born But…* (Umarete wa mita keredo)

[3] See also Wilson's section on crisis-time as a "buzz word" from 1932 (2002: 62−7).

(1932), *Dragnet Girl* (Hijōsen no onna) (1933), or *Passing Fancy* (Dekigokoro) (1933), as Satō Tadao observed, were produced with the aim of showcasing a 'new sophisticated "modern" style of filmmaking" (Satō; cited in Standish 2005: 43), but Standish among others analyses them with regard to their common 'social realist questioning of 1930s Japan' (ibid.). Apart from this thematic coherence, their other commonality was the somewhat unusual sounding name of the scriptwriter, James Maki (ジェームス槇, ゼームス槇, etc.). Maki's films were successful, because he 'combined the smartness of his American father and the delicacy of his Japanese mother' (Ozu, cited in Rayns 2010), which seems to explain both the modern and aesthetic appeal of the works. Maki, however, consisted of three people, Ozu himself,[4] Fushimi Akira (1900−1970) and Ikeda Tadao (1905−1964).

The 'James Maki script writing collaborations' (Standish 2005: 43) are interesting to me with regard to their collective nature and political outlook. Collaboration denotes a certain synergy that transcends individual expression and often the use of a penname allows this expression to go beyond specific star personas and styles and into new, even contradictory areas. The Maki film's relative social realist character fits the genre of films about 'normal people' (*shoshimin geki*), the lower urban middle-class and expressed contemporary concerns at a time when a feeling of 'crisis' could be evoked easily. The Japanese cinema, however, displays a peculiar specificity: Since its inception it had been split (thematically and industrially in terms of dedicated studios, crew and often cast) between films depicting the present (*gendai geki* - derived from the *shinpa* theatrical tradition) and films dealing with the pre-Meji past (*jidai geki,* previously *kyūha* tradition). *Jidai geki* also inherited the function to use past settings to comment critically on present issues from the theatrical convention of *mitate*, an allusive layering of past and present, under pre- and early modern censorship conditions that forbade the open depiction of certain, contemporaneous events, people, or scandals. If the 'James Maki' *gendai geki* were able to shine a critical spotlight on the present through their stylistic relation to contemporary life in the suburbs and derive their style from the collaborative nature of their genesis, how did such a tendency — if at all — manifest in *jidai geki?* Again, Ozu provides a link here. He was good friends — in a mentor-style relationship — with one of the foremost directors of the genre, Yamanaka Sadao (1909−1938). At the time, it is fair to say, Yamanaka, together with Inagaki Hiroshi (1905−1980) and Itami Mansaku (1900−1946) was at the forefront of a reformation of the genre, just like *shoshimin eiga* had changed stylistic and thematic sensibilities within the realm of *gendaigeki*. And like Ozu, Yamanaka was part of a filmmaking collective, that operated across the generally strict studio lines of the time.

The 'Narutaki gumi' operated in the mid-1930s, and consisted of a varying number of scriptwriters and directors. The Nikkatsu Studios, where Yamanaka was employed, moving to the Tokyo suburb of Chōfu in 1933 and Yamanaka therefore changing to Kataoka Chiezō Production,s where he met Inagaki seems to have been the spark that resulted in the energetic scriptwriting collaborations of the Kyoto group. At the most, eight people were involved, and this is when the original work, the script or its revision of the respective film is attributed to Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八 — please note the character 'eight' in Kajiwara's first name. According to founding member Inagaki Hiroshi's recollections (1981: 174), the young filmmakers chose the name Kajiwara because they particularly liked 'Kajiwara kun', likely Kajiwara Hideo, 1911−1943, the then star-hitter of the intercollegiate Tokyo Big6 Baseball League (*Tōkyō roku daigaku yakyū renmei*). These young directors and scriptwriters, according to Inagaki, met more or less every evening to 'eat, drink, and talk about nothing but film' (ibid.). It was then that they came up with the idea to 'make interesting (*omoshiroi*) *jidai geki*. The aim that all were enthusiastic about was to produce scripts with a success rate of at least seven out of ten. These 'interesting *jidai* geki' were written collaboratively under the pen name Kajiwara. The eight people constituting Kajiwara Kinpachi at various times and in changing constellations hailed from various studios, but all lived (or even cohabitated) in the Narutaki area:

Scriptwriter Yahiro Fuji (八尋不二, 18 July 1904−9 November 1986; Shinkō Kinema), scriptwriter Mimura Shintarō (三村伸太郎, 1 October 1897−29 April 1970; freelance, previously Takarazuka Kinema and Hayama Eiga

[4] James Maki for instance was the writer of *I Was Born But* (Umarete was mita keredo, 1932), but the 'rhetorical flourishes' (*junjoku*), that is the script revision, was done by Ibushiya Geibei (燻屋鯨兵衛), yet another penname of Ozu.

Renmei[5]), scriptwriter Fujii Shigeshi (藤井滋司, 1908−1970; Shōchiku Shimogamo), director Takizawa Eisuke (滝沢英輔, 6 September 1902−29 January 1965), director Inagaki Hiroshi (稲垣浩 30 December 1905−21 May 1980; Kataoka Chiezō Production), director Yamanaka Sadao (山中貞雄 8 November 1909−17 September 1938; Nikkatsu Kyoto, after being head-hunted (*hiki nuki*) from Arashi Kanjurō Production [Kan Pro]) , director Suzuki Momosaku (鈴木桃作 1901 ?−14 January 1941 [also as Doi Seikan 土肥 正幹]; Shinkō Kinema), and assistant director Hagiwara Ryō (萩原遼 1910 ?−3 April 1976; Nikkatsu Kyoto, formerly Makino Production). The first film crediting Kajiwara was released in July 1934: Namiki Kyōtarō's *The Detective Records of Umon: 210 days* (Umon torimonochō nihyakujūnichi). Here, his first name is 'Kinshirō' (金四郎); he still carries the character "four" in his name, and was also sometimes named 'Kinroku' (金六, the last character means 'six'), depending on how many members collaborated in the respective script and film.

Kajiwara 'wrote' or 'refined' twenty-two screenplays and/or originals, which were directed by Narutaki members or directors from the respective production studio, such as Nikkatsu's Arai Ryōhei 荒井良平 (1901−1980). Many films are based on the popular historical novels or plays by Hasegawa Shin 長谷川 (1884−1963) or Shimozawa Kan 子母澤寛 (1892−1968), many featuring wandering gamblers or fighters (*matatabi mono*). These originals already contained within their seemingly romanticist depiction of Edo-period life aspects of modern sentiments and sensibilities, as well as the gritty realism that would also distinguish the Narutaki-films, written and 'polished' by Kajiwara. Before embarking on considerations about the nature of collective or collaborative filmmaking in global and local terms, it is helpful to obtain an impression of the Narutaki gumi's output during the four years of its existence.

Annotated list of 'Kajiwara films'

1934

1. *The Detective Records of Umon: 210 days*;[6] *Umon torimonochō: nihyakujūnichi*; 右門捕物帖 二百十日
   script: Kajiwara Kinshirō 梶原金四郎
   director: Namiki Kyōtarō 並木鏡太郎
   original work: Sasaki Mitsuzō 佐々木味津三
   cinematography: Yoshimi Shigeo 吉見滋男
   cast: Arashi Kanjūrō 嵐寛寿郎 (lead); Atamayama Keinosuke 頭山桂之助; Onoe Monya 尾上紋弥; Arashi Tokusaburō 嵐徳三郎
   Arashi Kanjūrō Purodakushon 嵐寛寿郎プロダクション (Kan Puro 寛プロ)
   silent (*museihan*; 無声版) (rel.) 12 July 1934

2. *Cry of Victory*; *Kachidoki*; 勝鬨
   script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
   director: Koishi Eīchi Koishi 小石栄一
   original work: Hata Fuyukichi旗冬吉
   cinematography: Ishimoto Hideo石本秀雄
   cast: Kataoka Chiezō 片岡千恵蔵 (lead); Hanai Ranko 花井蘭子; Hayashi Seinosuke林誠之助; Onoe Kajō 尾上華丈

[5] Actor Hayama Shunsuke's (1902−?) short-lived independent company (1933−1934).

[6] When available, English titles have been taken from Jacoby (2008), otherwise these are my own translations. 'Detective Umon' was a highly popular *jidaigeki* character, with no less than twenty-nine films produced between 1929 to 1943 (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 142−4) and later revived several times. Based on Sazaki Mitsuzō's 1929 novel *Umon Torimonochō*, Yamanda Sadao wrote the first eight screenplays about the "Japanese Sherlock Holmes", mostly embodied by Arashi Kanjirō. "210 Days" was the twelfth instalment.

Kataoka Chiezō Purodakushon 片岡千恵蔵プロダクション (Chie Puro 千恵プロ)
silent; (rel.) 13 September 1934

3. *Gantarō's Travel*;[7] *Gantarō kaidō*; 雁太郎街道
script: Mimura Shintarō 三村伸太郎
director: Yamanaka Sadao 山中貞雄
original work: Kajiwara Kinroku 梶原金六
cinematography: Ishimoto Hideo 石本秀雄
cast: Kataoka Chiezō 片岡千恵蔵 (lead); Fushimi Naoe 伏見直江; Segawa Michisaburō 瀬川路三郎; Takizawa Shizuko 滝沢静子
Kataoka Chiezō Purodakushon 片岡千恵蔵プロダクション
talkie (*tōki*; トーキー); (rel.) 29 November 1934[8]

1935

4. *Sunny Kiso Road*; *Hareru Kisoji*; 晴れる木曽路
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Takizawa Eisuke 滝沢英輔
original work: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Yo Atsuo (?) 与篤夫
cast: Ichikawa Utaemon 市川右太衛門 (lead); Himori Shinichi日守新一; Shinobu Setsuko 忍節子; Takuo Ōnishi T大西卓夫
Ichikawa Utaemon Production 市川右太衛門プロダクション (Uta Puro 右太プロ)
sound version (*saundo han* サウンド版); (rel.) 12 April 1935

5. *White Snow of Mt Fuji*; *Fuji no shiroyuki*; 富士の白雪
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Inagaki Hiroshi 稲垣浩
original work: Inagaki Hiroshi (Draft) 稲垣浩 (原案)
revision: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Takemura Yasukazu 竹村康和
cast: Ōkōchi Denjirō大河内傳次郎 (lead); Toba Yōnosuke 鳥羽陽之助; Takase Minoru 高勢実乗; Shirō Ōsaki 大崎史郎
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
sound version; (rel.) 15 October 1935

6. *Yatappe of Seki*;[9] *Seki no Yatappe*; 関の弥太っぺ

[7] Yamanaka's first talkie, a *matatabi mono* (a subgenre of *jidaigeki*, depicting wandering gamblers or yakuza) based on Frank Capra's It *Happened One Night* (1934) won the *Kinema Junpō*'s Tenth Best Film of 1934 (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 323)
[8] The variety of terms related to sound in this filmography displays the transitional nature of the film world at the time. 'Talkie', or rather 'all talkie' (*ōru tōkī*) are full-blown sound films, with the dialogue, music, and background sound audible on the soundtrack. Although experiments with sound had begun earlier, Japan's first, feature-length 'all talkie', famously, is Gosho Heinosuke's The Neighbor's Wife and Mine (*Madamu to nyōbō*, 1931), which successfully used Shōchiku's own Tsuchihashi sound system (*Tsuchihashi shiki Shōchiku fōn*). 'Sound version' (*saundo ban*) is one of the transitional permutations of not-quite sound film, with music and sound effects; 'part talkie' (*pāto tōkī*) had parts of the dialogue on the soundtrack. Silent movies continued to be made in Japan until 1937.
[9] Various Kajiwara films are based on the popular plays or novels written by Hasegawa Shin (1884−1963). 'Kid' Yata of Seki is one of his rough but longing-for-love wanderers (*matatabi*), well-beloved by readers and audiences, he reappeared various times in *chanbara* films, as well as in manga and anime.

script: Mimura Shintarō 三村伸太郎
directors: Inagaki Hiroshi 稲垣浩, Yamanaka Sadao 山中貞雄
original work: Hasegawa Shin 長谷川伸
revision: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Matsumura Teizō 松村禎三; Takemura Yasukazu 竹村康和
cast: Ōkōchi Denjirō 大河内傳次郎 (lead); Toba Yōnosuke 鳥羽陽之助; Yamamoto Reizaburō 山本礼三郎; Fukamizu Fujiko 深水藤子
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
talkie (rel.) 14 July 1935

7. *The Chronicles of Toyotomi Hideyoshi: The Story of Lowly Tōkichirō*;[10] *Taikōki: Tōkichirō sōsotsu no maki*; 太閤記 藤吉郎走卒の巻
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Takizawa Eisuke 滝沢英輔
original work: Yada Sōun 矢田挿雲
cinematography: Fujī Harumi 藤井春美
cast: Onoe Eigorō 尾上栄五郎 (lead); Nītsuma Shirō 新妻四郎; Sugiyama Shōsaku 杉山昌三九; Taisuke Matsumoto 松本泰輔
Shinkō Kinema Kyōto Satsueijō 新興キネマ京都撮影所
sound version (rel.) 15 August 1935

8. *Slipper Samurai*;*Tsukkake samurai*; 突っかけ侍[11]
script: Jikushita Ihatsu 舳下逸発
director: Arai Ryōhei 荒井良平
original work: Shimozawa Kan 子母澤寛
revision: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Tanimoto Seishi 谷本精史
cast: Onoe Kikutarō 尾上菊太郎 (lead); Sawamura Kunitarō 沢村国太郎; Katsuragi Kōichi 葛木香一; Kitō Zenichirō 鬼頭善一郎
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
talkie, (rel.) 25 August 1935

9. *Ketaguri Ondo Part 1*;[12] *Ketaguri ondo zenpen*; 蹴手繰り音頭 前篇
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Kintarō Inoue 井上金太郎
original work: Hasegawa Shin 長谷川
cinematography: Itō Takeo 伊藤武夫
cast: Bandō Kōtarō 坂東好太郎 (lead); Tsukigata Ryūnosuke 月形龍之介 Īzuka Toshiko 飯塚敏子 Ōuchi Hiroshi 大内弘
Shōchiku Shitakamo Satsueijō 松竹下加茂撮影所

[10] The sequel *Taitōki Tokichirō shusse hiyaku no maki* (太閤記 藤吉郎出世飛躍の巻, Shinkō) was released on 5 January 1936, albeit with a different crew (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 323).
[11] Adaptation of Shimozawa Kan's (1892−1968) eponymous novel (1934).
[12] Adaptation of an *Ōsaka Mainichi Shinbun* serialized novel (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 416).

talkie, (rel.) 31 October 1935

10. *Ketaguri Ondo Part 2*; *Ketaguri ondo kōhen*; 蹴手繰り音頭 後篇
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Kintarō Inoue 井上金太郎
original work: Hasegawa Shin 長谷川
cinematography: Itō Takeo 伊藤武夫
cast: Bandō Kōtarō 坂東好太郎 (lead); Tsukigata Ryūnosuke 月形龍之介; Īzuka Toshiko 飯塚敏子; Ōuchi Hiroshi 大内弘
Shōchiku Shitakamo Satsueijō 松竹下加茂撮影所
talkie; (rel.) 15 November 1935

11. *The Burglar's White Mask, Part 1*; *Kaitō shirozukin zenpen*; 怪盗白頭巾 前篇
script: Mimura Shintarō 三村伸太郎
director: Yamanaka Sadao 山中貞雄; assistant director: Ishibashi Seiichi 石橋清一[13]
original work: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Matsumura Teizō 松村禎三
cast: Ōkōchi Denjirō 大河内傳次郎 (lead); KurokawaYatarō 黒川弥太郎; Takase Minoru 高勢実乗; Toba Yōnosuke 鳥羽陽之助
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
talkie, (rel.) 31 December 1935

160 **1936**

12. *The Unparalleled Miyamoto Musashi*; *Kaidai Musō*; 海内無双
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Takizawa Eisuke 滝沢英輔
original work: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Tamai Masao 玉井正夫
cast: Ichikawa Utaemon 市川右太衛門 (lead); Sakuma Taeko 佐久間妙子; Takei Ryūzō 武井龍三; Tamura Kunio 田村邦男
Ichikawa Utaemon Production 市川右太衛門プロダクショ
sound version; (rel.) 5 January 1936

13. *The Burglar's White Mask, Part 2*; *Kaitō shirozukin kōhen*; 怪盗白頭巾 後篇
script: Mimura Shintarō 三村伸太郎
director: Yamanaka Sadao 山中貞雄; assistant director: Ishibashi Seiichi 石橋清一
original work: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Matsumura Teizō 松村禎三
cast: Ōkōchi Denjirō 大河内傳次郎 (lead); KurokawaYatarō 黒川弥太郎; Takase Minoru高勢実乗; Toba Yōnosuke 鳥羽陽之助
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
talkie; (rel.) 15 January 1936

[13] Ishibashi had trained under Inagaki Hiroshi (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 265).

14. *Spring in Edo: Kin-san of Tōyama*; *Edo no haru: Tōyama zakura*; 江戸の春遠山桜[14]
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Arai Ryōhei 荒井良平
original work: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Tanimoto Seishi 谷本精史
cast: Onoe Kikutarō 尾上菊太郎 (lead); Takatsu Aiko 高津愛子; Fukamizu Fujiko 深水藤子; Suzumura Kyōko鈴村京子
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
talkie; (rel.) 23 January 1936

15. *Miyamoto Musashi: The Earth Chapter*; *Miyamoto Musashi: chi no maki*; 宮本武蔵 地の巻
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Takizawa Eisuke 滝沢英輔
original work: Yoshikawa Eiji 吉川英治
cinematography: Yoshimi Shigeo吉見滋男
cast: Arashi Kanjūrō 嵐寛寿郎 (lead); Sugiyama Shōsaku 杉山昌三九; Mori Shizuko 森静子; Mōri Mineko 毛利峰子
Arashi Kanjūrō Purodakushon 嵐寛寿郎プロダクション
talkie; (rel.) 16 May 1936

16. *The Oil-Hell Murder; Onna koroshi: abura no jigoku*; 女殺油地獄
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Fujita Junichi 藤田潤一
original work: Chikamatsu Monzaemon 近松門左衞門
cinematography: Ishimoto Hideo 石本秀雄
cast: Kataoka Chiezō 片岡千恵蔵 (lead); Tsukigata Ryūnosuke 月形龍之介; Shibata Arata 芝田新; Fujio Jun 藤尾純
Kataoka Chiezō Purodakushon 片岡千恵蔵プロダクション
talkie; (rel.) 31 July 1936

17. *Seacoast Highway*; *Umi nari kaidō*; 海鳴り街道
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Yamanaka Sadao 山中貞雄
original work: Mimura Shintarō 三村伸太郎
cinematography: Mitsui Rokusaburō 三井六三郎
cast: Ōkōchi Denjirō 大河内傳次郎 (lead); Takase Minoru 高勢実乗; Toba Yōnosuke 鳥羽陽之助; Yokoyama Unpei 横山運平
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō日活京都撮影所
talkie, (rel.) 14 August 1936

18. *Araki Mataemon*; *Araki Mataemon*; 荒木又右衛門

[14] Tōyama no Kin san is a 'Robin Hood' character in Japanese folklore. Based on Edo magistrate Tōyama Kagemoto (遠山景元, 1793−1855), he is recognizable by a *sakura* tattoo on his shoulder, and appeared in numerous tales and kabuki plays, fighting for the ordinary people. Jinde Tatsurō's (陣出 達朗, 1907−1986) postwar series of novels (1955−1974) on Tōyama inspired several Tōhō films with Kataoka Chiezō in the lead, as well as numerous TV adaptations etc.

script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Hagiwara Ryō 萩原遼
original work: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
cinematography: Ishimoto Hideo 石本秀雄
cast: Kataoka Chiezō 片岡千恵蔵 (lead); Segawa Michisaburō 瀬川路三郎; Hayashi Seinosuke 林誠之助; Hara Kensaku 原健策
Kataoka Chiezō Purodakushon片岡千恵蔵プロダクション
talkie; (rel.) 15 October 1936

1937

19. *The Legend of the Sengoku Band of Robbers Part 1: Wild Beasts*; *Sengoku guntō den zenpen: korō*; 戦国群盗伝 前篇 虎狼[15]
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Takizawa Eisuke 滝沢英輔
original work: Miyoshi Jūrō 三好十郎
cinematography: Katazawa Hiromitsu 唐沢弘光
cast: Kawarasaki Chōjūrō 河原崎長十郎 (lead); Nakamura Kanemon 中村翫右衛門; Ichikawa Eimitarō 市川笑太郎; Ichikawa Mushiroshi 市川莚司
P.C.L Eiga Seisakujo Zenshin-za P.C.L映画製作所 前進座
talkie (rel.) 11 February 1937

20. *The Legend of the Sengoku Band of Robbers Part 2: Advance at Dawn*; *Sengoku guntō den kōhen: akatsuki no zenshi*n; 戦国群盗伝 後篇 暁の前進
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Takizawa Eisuke 滝沢英輔
original work: Miyoshi Jūrō 三好十郎
cinematography: Katazawa Hiromitsu 唐沢弘光
cast: Kawarasaki Chōjūrō河原崎長十郎 (lead); Nakamura Kanemon中村翫右衛門; Ichikawa Eimitarō市川笑太郎; Ichikawa Mushiroshi市川莚司
P.C.L Eiga Seisakujo Zenshin-za P.C.L映画製作所 前進座
talkie; (rel.) 20 February 1937

21. *Shamisen of the Floating World: The First String*; *Ukiyo shamisen daiichigen*; 浮世三味線 第一絃
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Arai Ryōhe i荒井良平
original work: Kunieda Kanji 邦枝完二
cinematography: Araki Asajirō 荒木朝二郎
cast: Kurokawa Yatarō 黒川彌太郎 (lead); Hanai Ranko花井蘭子; Kiyokawa Sōji 清川荘司; Ichikawa Momonosuke 市川百之助
Nikkatsu Kyōto Satsueijō 日活京都撮影所
talkie; (rel.) 1 December 1937

[15] The first PCL-Zenshin-za collaboration, drawing Miyoshi Jūrō's play *Yoshino no tōzoku* (吉野の盗賊), written for the Zenshin-za and based on Schiller's play *Die Räuber* (The Robbers 1781) (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 691).

1939

22. *The Night Before*; *Sono zenya*; その前夜[16]
script: Kajiwara Kinpachi 梶原金八
director: Hagiwara Ryō 萩原遼
original work: Yamanaka Sadao (draft) 山中貞雄（原案）
cinematography: Kawasaki Kikuzō 河崎喜久三
cast: Kawarasaki Chōjūrō 河原崎長十郎 (lead); Suketaka Yasukezō 助高屋助蔵; Kiyokawa Tamae 清川玉枝; Nakamura Kanemon 中村翫右衛門; Chiba Sachiko 千葉早智子; Takamine Hideko 高峰秀子; Kiyokawa Tamae 清川玉枝; Yamada Isuzu 山田 五十鈴
Tōhō Eiga Kyōto Satsueijō 東宝映画京都撮影所
talkie; (rel.) 21 October 1939

Making films together

Filmmaking collectives or collaborative filmmaking — the distinction between those two concepts will play a role further on — are an interesting, but still underexplored mode of film production. When we think about filmmaking collectives, the two prime examples that spring to mind in the Japanese context are the Proletarian Film League of Japan (Prokino, 1929) and Ogawa Productions (Ogawa Pro), founded in the late 1960s and exerting a large degree of incluence on Japanese documentary filmmaking (Nornes 2003 and 2007). As seen for instance in the 'United We Stand, Divided We Fall' programme, curated by Federico Rossin at the 2012 Doclisboa documentary film festival in Lisbon, the focus is often on documentary films for their political and social-critical, radical, or anarchist concern and on the era from the 1960s to the 1980s, that is characterized by radical movements in many parts of the world. Rossin chose documentary film produced between 1968 and 1987 by collectives such as the Group Dziga Vertov, The Newsreel Collective, or Cinema Action[17]. Yet, he also points out the 'hidden history' of what he calls 'collective cinema': In fact, this mode of filmmaking began at the latest with Armand Guerra's (born as Jose Estivalis Cabo at Liria, 1886−1939) short-lived, Paris-based Cinéma du Peuple (The People's Cinema, 1913−14): 'a novel propaganda weapon for libertarians, the very first militant use of the new-born medium of film' (Jarry 2009: 1−2). The endeavour's collective nature is explained by Guerra as follows:

> Bidamant, the then secretary of the Union des Syndicats de France … spoke to me about making movies on social themes as a means of countering the inane bourgeois nonsense that all the studios were serving up to the public. Seeing this as a chance of breathing fresh life into the movies — even then! — I put it to him that

[16] A 'memorial film' with a high-profile cast by his 'disciple' Hagiwara for Yamanaka, who had passed away on 17 September 1938 (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 708). The remaining seven Narutaki-gumi members turned Yamanaka's draft *Kiyamachi Sanjō* (木屋町三条) into the screenplay.

[17] *La Reprise du Travail aux Usines Wonder* (Jacques Villemont, 1968), *Classe de Lutte* (Groupe Medvedkine de Besançon, 1969), *À pas lentes* (Collectif Cinélutte, 1979), *Vladimir et Rosa* (Groupe Dziga Vertov, 1970), *Winter Soldier* (Winterfilm Collective, 1972), *Off the Pig* (San Francisco Newsreel, 1968), *Finally Got the News* (Stewart Bird, Peter Gessner, Rene Lichtman and John Louis Jr., 1970), *El pueblo se levanta* (The Newsreel Collective, 1971), *Red Squad* (Howard Blatt, Steven Fischler, Joel Sucher, 1972), *Un peuple en marche* (Colectivo cinematográfico de alumnos argelinos, 1963), *Caminhos da Liberdade* (Cinequipa, 1974), *L'Aggettivo Donna* (Collettivo Femminista di Cinema di Roma, 1971), *Women of the Rhondda* (London Women's Film Group, 1973), *Maso et Miso vont en Bateau* (Nadja Ringart, Carole Roussopoulos, Delphine Seyrig and Ioana Wieder,1976), *Night Cleaners Part 1* (Berwick Street Collective, 1972-1975), *So That You Can Live* (Cinema Action, 1982), *The Year of the Beaver: A Film Aout the Modern 'Civilised' State* (Poster Film Collective, 1982), *Territoires* (Isaac Julien, 1984), *Handsworth Songs* (John Akomfrah, 1986), *Vai Viegli Būt Jaunam?* (Juris Podnieks, 1987).

> we should launch a Cooperative among the working class by offering shares at 25 francs apiece … two months after our conversation, I was installed in the Paris studios of Lux Film in the Boulevard Jourdan, shooting my first movie for the Cinéma du Peuple Cooperative, with a budget of 500,000 francs (raised through 20,000 shares at 25 francs apiece) (Guerra 2009: 10).

As a limited liability cooperative company, the Cinéma du Peuple utilized the new technology of cinema for worker's liberation, class-struggle, and social transformation. Its foundation charter clearly expresses this calls to arms and to solidarity: 'The company would strive to improve the intellectual levels of the people. It would remain in ongoing like-minded communion with whatever sections of the proletariat that made their stand on the basis of class struggle and whose aim was to do away with wage slavery by means of an economic transformation of society (Jarry 2009: 2−3). To this means, precisely because they were intended as 'antidotes' to what the steering committee identified 'the trashy cinemas which … foster with their unwholesome productions a propaganda that stultifies the worker and peasant class' (ibid: 5), the Cinéma du Peuple's films were dramas as well, rather than the documentary style usually connoted with politically motivated, collaborative filmmaking.

Rossin points out the global proliferation of collectivist cinema in the 1920s and 1930s, such as Prokino in Japan (1929−34), and Aleksandr Medvedkin's Film-Train in the Soviet Union (1933−4) , and in the United States the Workers Film and Photo League (1930−4), Nykino (1935−7) and Frontier Film Group (1936−42) (in Phelps 2012: 101). Looking at the time of their activity, it is clear to see that, like their more prominent postwar counterparts, 'these collectives were born during an economic and social crisis' (ibid.). And they were, indeed, in many ways a reaction to this crisis, which is why Rossin urges us to consider them 'both as aesthetic objects and political tools' (ibid.). Political documentaries thus lead us 'back to a strong and deep belief in the real, in the world, in the people. Cinema is not just a dream machine: it can be a strong mean to understand, analyze and change reality' (ibid.: 102) . And 'cinema' as the terminus operandi provides the connection to the Narutaki gumi. In taking on and transforming a popular and time-honoured genre to respond to current sensibilities and concerns, despite the doubtlessly often plainly enjoyable work and entertaining product, they nevertheless changed aesthetics sensibilities and thus, on a small scale, the world. Having high-class samurai suddenly speak the upper-class style of speech of the high-brow dwellers of the Yamanote area in Tokyo, and peasants use the Shitamachi (Downtown) dialect, clearly brought the past into the present and the current class system into the light. By depicting legendary heroes or the descendants of respectable nobility as humane, lazy, lustful, or greedy, they participated in debates about social hierarchies. Although, clearly, the James Maki as well as the Kajiwara Kinpachi collaborations were far less overtly political, nor 'collectives' in the more narrow sense as for instance with Guerra or Ogawa's groups, they and their collaborative work nevertheless originates in similar external circumstances, and, following Standish's argument (2005: 43), in observing and commenting on contemporary events and situations, they must be seen as political as well, albeit on a different spectrum.

Having thus established a historically sensitive contextual framework in which to locate the Narutaki gumi, we can go on to examine the way that their collaboration impacted on their films. How was a 'Kajiwara' film directed by Yamanaka for instance, different to a films scripted by somebody else? This question will be tackled in the research project's second stage, but as a preliminary observation, Phelps's typology of collectivist film — adjusted to the less consciously or overtly political Narutaki group — can help to shed a light on the matter. He proposes two types of collectivist film: '1) one that seeks to erase the differences between its members in favor of a propagandistic position and pitch, and 2) one that seeks to promote differences by facilitating discussion and debate among members' (2012: 105). This concept points towards the important question of authorship. While, in its ideal permutation, the collective seems to promise a way to erase the problematic concept, human nature to always come back to the notions of power and hierarchy. This has been pointed out, for instance, by Nornes with regard to Ogawa Productions, which, after all, even bore Ogawa Shinsuke's name (2007: 181). 'In every collective the question of power was the core' (Rossin, in Phelps 2012: 101), but the issue is, perhaps, how this question was answered, the use this 'power' was put to. The Narutaki group clearly had some core-members, the most prominent one being Yamanaka Sadao, and it is perhaps telling that his death was one of the reasons for the group to dissolve. As another core member, Inagaki Hiroshi points

out, Kinpachi's scripts had a distinct Yamanaka-like flavour to them (1983: 174). On the other hand, the use of a pen name, as pointed out before, did not erase the question of the author, but posited an author who was a simulacrum and therefore could neither be pinned down entirely nor exert the discursive power usually connoted to this construct. Hence, despite their collaborative nature, Kajiwara as well as Maki here differ from the framework of collectivist cinema established above. Yet, and also with regard to the question of political concerns and objectives, another of Rossin's classifications of collectivist cinema is of importance: The special relationship between the filmmakers and the actors. Rossin observed that in many 'collectivist films' the 'actors seem to take over the movie not only by determining how they act, but often by being the filmmakers themselves' (Rossin, cited in Phelps 2012: 101). Many of the Narutaki members, as not unusual in the film world, had experience as actors, but they did not act in Kajiwara films. However, there clearly was a significant, symbiotic and fruitful exchange between actors and filmmakers, and the issue of which kind of actors Kajiwara Kinpachi collaborated with is an important one: 'The burning life of both [actors and filmmakers] is the very core of collectivist cinema: they wanted to change their life, the present, the cinema itself' (ibid.).

Filmmakers and actors

To put Rossin's remark about the strong connection between actors and filmmakers in collectivist cinema into local perspective, it is important to keep in mind that, also due to its strong studio system, Japanese filmmaking displays a high degree of personal continuities (think Kurosawa's work with Mifune Toshiro and Hashimoto Shinobu, or Ozu Yasujirō and his 'muse' Hara Setsuko, for instance). In the case of prewar *jidaigeki*, this tendency is also based in the specialized studio structure, with production companies dividing cast, crew, and locations along the *jidai geki*/*gendai geki* generic line. Particularly after the devastation caused by the Great Kanto earthquake of 25 September 1923, which largely destroyed the film production facilities in Tokyo — apart from the Shōchiku Kamata Studios — the big studios entertained production facilities for *jidai geki* in Kyoto, and shot their *gendai geki* in newly erected Tokyo, and many smaller studios specialized in either genre. Therefore, the very physical divide caused a 'stable' formation of cast and crew for each genre within each studio. While this lead to a high degree of specialization, in 1933, prominent writer and director of *jida geki* Itami Mansaku strongly criticized the division: Wondering about the high percentage of *jidai geki* produced and the attraction of the genre, he considered the preference for period films as indicative of a mindset peculiar to the Japanese. He observed that no other nation divides film into 'contemporary' and 'non-contemporary' (*higendai*) films or keeps up such strict divisions between genres in terms of production, personnel and studios. Itami was critical of the obstructions this caused to a 'sound' development of the domestic film industry, since these structures were inefficient economically, and considered at the most one or two specialist advisors on the depiction of past life styles (*seikatsu yōshiki*) per studio as necessary (1961 [1933]: 25).

From the above description, the strict studio structures become obvious, a tendency which — despite several attempts by filmmakers to overcome the studios' power— would only increase in the following years with the increased competition following the rise of Tōhō as a film producer and the governmental measures to streamline production. Hence, Kajiwara crossing studio lines is noteworthy, but also — with regard to the Narutaki gumi advancing the genre of *jidaigeki* — it is significant that they partnered up with the Zenshin-za (前進座, 'forward advance'; progressive) theatre troupe, which had been founded on 22 May 1931 with the explicit aim of disrupting the 'feudal', unequal hierarchical structures of kabuki and the theatre world. Just like the Narutaki-gumi innovated the *jidai geki* genre (as to be examined in detail in this research project's next stage), the Zenshin-za greatly contributed to the development of the modern Japanese theatre (Powell 2002: 167), and they were the 'acknowledged stage experts in modern language in period settings' (Thornton 2008:113).

In 1929, several kabuki actors formed the Taishū-za (Theatre of the Masses). Closely connected to the Marxist movement, the young Taishū-za members mostly came from low-status kabuki families, and in the wake of the economic depression and the downturn in the entertainment business, had experienceds salary cuts and redundancies

(Powell 2002: 173).[18] The new troupe was eventually founded as a way of self-protection. They were joined in their efforts by members of another, disbanded kabuki troupe, the Kokoro-za that performed both *shin geki* and kabuki plays and had close connections to the proletarian drama movement. Eventually, these two troupes and some members of another acting family set up the Zenshin-za. Their aim was to establish a working environment based on equality and cooperation, and merit rather than lineage. While they had their star actors, they placed emphasis on ensemble plays and, in the beginning, on credits in alphabetic, rather than order of prestige. Upon their foundation on 22 May, 1931, the Zenshin-za consisted of thirty-two members, who continued performing *shin geki* and kabuki as well as their links to the proletarian movement.[19] At the time, the three leader figures in the troupe were Kawarazaki Chōjūrō IV (河原崎長十郎1902−1981), Nakamura Kanemon III (中村翫右衛門1901−1982), and Kawarazaki Kunitarō V (河原崎国太郎 1909−1990), other influential members included Arashi Yoshizaburō V (嵐芳三郎, 1907−1977) , Fujikawa Hachizō VII (藤川 八蔵, 1906−1974), Segawa Kikunojō VI (瀬川 菊之丞, 1907−1976), and Bandō Chōemon (坂東 調右衛門, 1896−1982). Although the group had to face the harsh real-life conditions and compromise some of their principles — such as alphabetic cast list — early on,[20] they did establish other aims with regard to work as a collective. In 1937, they set up a 'study centre' in Tokyo's western Kichijōji area, in which the members worked, practiced, and lived together (Nakamura 2013: 13); the 'establishment of communal life [being] the most significant reform of Zenshin-za' (ibid.: 183) and communal living being one of the prime aspects of collective work, as also for instance with Ogawa Pro.

This centre became possible financially also because of the eventual commercial success of the group's participation in film productions. Starting in 1933 with *Danshichi in the Rain* (Danchichi shigure, Koishi),[21] Zenshin-za's film operations were very profitable for the company (Powell 2002: 176). *Danshichi*, like many of the later Kajiwara films, is based on an eponymous novel by Hasegawa Shin (1933, note the quick turn-over into a film adaptation), which later Narutaki key member Inagaki Hiroshi turned into a screenplay.[22] In an interview with Sybil Thornton, Inagaki disclosed that Zenshin-za 'bad boy' Nakamura Kanemon was his favourite actor (as well as Hasegawa's), and not only did he write the screenplay for the Zenshin-za's first film venture, but also assisted in directing their second film, another Hasegawa adaptation, *Jirocho of Shimizu* (Shimizu Jirōchō, 1935, Ikeda)[23] (2008: 113). In the same year, Yamanaka Sadao also collaborated with the troupe for his *Village Tattooed Man* (Machi no irezumi mono) heralding the start of the Zanshin-za's profitable collaborations with Nikkatsu (and later Tōhō) as well as the Narutaki gumi, although, as seen before, the connection between the members predates the scriptwriting collaboration's foundation. It was the commercial success of the Kajiwara Kinpachi two-parter *The Legend of the Sengoku Band of Robbers* (Sengoku guntō den, Takizawa) in 1937 that enabled the Zenshin-za to set up their research center (Nakamura 2013:13).

Filmmaking collaborations' often 'burning' incentive to 'change their life, the present, the cinema itself' (Rossin, cited in Phelps 2012: 101) can be observed in the activities of the Zenshin-za, the Nartuaki gumi's innovations that made the genre responsive and relevant to contemporary concerns and their crossing of studio lines, specifically within the industrial context of the Japanese film industry that increasingly saw a monopolizing of the business and a stifling of

[18] On the development of 'communist' kabuki see Powell (2002).
[19] After the war, almost all members joined the Japanese Communist Party (see Powell 2002).
[20] See also Brandon on their wartime work (2003).
[21] The production company for *Danchichi in the Rain* was Dai nippon jiyū eiga purodakushon (大日本自由映画プロダクション) . This was the second incarnation of early film superstar Bandō Tsumasaburō's (阪東 妻三郎, 1901−1953) production company. Bandō set up his Tsumasaburō Purodakushon in Uzumasa in 1925, at the height of his fame, producing over 130 films and even setting up a short-lived joint production company with American Universal. In 1931, the company moved to Chiba and rebranded as Dai nippon jiyū eiga purodakushon. This first independent company by a Japanese actor eventually was dissolved in 1936 and Bandō joined Nikkatsu one year later (www.arc.ritsumei.ac.jp/archive01/makino/aruke/aruke10.html; accessed 22 January 2020).
[22] *Homeless Danchichi and the Rainy Day Umbrella* (Yadonashi Danshichi shigure no karakasa) is a 1767 kabuki play by Namiki Shōzō (1730−1773).
[23] Based on real-life Yamamoto Chogoro (1820−1893), Shimizu no Jirōchō is one of Japan's Robin Hood-style gangster/folk heroes. Ikeda's is the seventeenth of eighteen Jirōchō-themed films produced between 1912 and 1953 (the eighteenth was directed by Namiki in 1952) (jmdb.com).

competition.

The film industry experienced tumultuous times: On the one hand, the state on the way towards more control increasingly interfered, on the other hand there were movements towards free competition and greater autonomy of individuals versus oppressive studio contracts, On 26 February 1936, these contradictory currents met in Tokyo: with the attempted coup d'état that aimed at increasing military control over the government and set Japan on the path to total war, and the inaugural meeting of the Directors Guild of Japan (Nihon Eiga Kantoku Kyōkai). Narutaki members Inagaki and Yamanaka were part of the union — initially for fiction film directors, but later opening to documentary film makers as well — that aimed at increasing their member's rights and their independence from the business and the big studios (www.dgj.or.jp/about/; accessed 02 March 2020). In retrospect, this move towards independence and free competition in connection with the looming subsumption of the film industry under state control with the aim of wartime mass mobilization evokes the image of a discursive threshold.

The film world, still in 1936, saw the opportunity to change their circumstances, as seen for instance with the establishment of the independent Film Association 'Rengō Eigasha' (R.E.S.) in Kyoto in late April 1936 by Inagaki's friend and mentor Itami Mansaku, director Nobuchi Akira, prominent *jidai geki* actor Tsukigata Ryūnosuke and producer Morita Nobuyoshi (*Yomiuri Shinbun* 1936a).[24] Yet, R.E.S. failed almost immediately because Morita joined the newly-emerging 'Tōhō Block' in July 1936 (Shutsū and Nagata 2008: 1086). Tōhō's meteoric rise, following Kobayashi Ichizō's gaining control of P.C.L. and J.O. in 1935 and the formation of the Tōhō Motion Picture Distribution Corporation in the following year provoked countermeasures: Shōchiku, its subsidiary Shinkō, Nikkatsu, and Daito Eiga had formed the so-called Yonsha Renmei (Y.S.R.), 'a four-company agreement which had as its unwritten aim a complete boycott of Toho' (Anderson and Richie 1982: 85).[25] The means employed by Y.S.R. resulted in a decline of Tōhō theatres, in turn evoking retaliation by Tōhō (Nakayama 2011: 33). A contemporary newspaper article captures the general atmosphere, using martial terms like 'enemy number one for Nikkatsu and Shōchiku' and 'financial war' (*Yomiuri Shibun* 1936b). Eventually, this development led to the formation of two, almost equally powerful blocks, as many of the small, independent companies concluded contracts with Tōhō, out of fear of a 'dictatorship' by the trust (Körber-Abe 2010: 24).

These are the conditions the Narutaki gumi operated under and, strikingly, transversed studio lines. But these are also the conditions that led to the famous star-stealing (*hiki nuki*, lit. 'pulling out') episodes, a related anecdote of which shall conclude this research note: When Hayashi Chōjirō (aka Hasegawa Kazuo, 1908−1984) was lured away by rather dubious methods from Shōchiku to Tōhō in September 1937: 'even amongst the rising clamor of the China incident, the newspapers found space to howl at his ingratitude and perfidy' (High 2003: 154). Two months later, Hayashi became victim of a knife attack that left his left cheek permanently scarred. The suspicion that Shōchiku was involved in this attack on the highly popular actor shifted public sympathy to Tōhō's side (Anderson and Richie 1982: 86−88). The matter at hand, for Itami Mansaku commenting on the practice of star-stealing and the blaming of the actors, is that the companies are in the positions of power, not the actors and directors (Itami, 1961 [1936]). Hence, the blame for unscrupulous methods should go to them, rather than to the 'passive' partners in these transactions, who ultimately depended on the companies either reaching out for or rejecting a person:

> 'Thinking about the origin of the word *hiki nuki* … namely the nominative case of the transitive verb *hiki nuku*, the subject is always the company; the actors and directors are only ever the objects … Long story short, the law punishes the man who pulls out a radish in some field, it never punishes the pulled-out radish' (Ibid.).

On a less somber note, Inagaki remembers that, due to the high popularity of Kajiwara Kinpachi films (and if course within the competitive atmosphere in the film world described above), Shōchiku Head Kido Shirō (1894−1977)

[24] In this context, Shutsū and Nagata refer to Morita establishing the 'Film People's New Village' (*Eigajin atarashiki mura*) (2008: 1086). I found no further reference to this group but, subject to evidence indicating otherwise, assume it to be identical to the Rengō Eigasha.
[25] The Y.R.S. was, of course, not the first trust to be formed in Japan in order to hold competition at bay, the earliest one being established in 1910 and resulting it the formation of Nikkatsu in 1912.

— the initiator of the Narutaki *jidai geki* contemporary *shoshimin eiga* counterpart — ordered his Head of Production Ōkubo Tadamoto (1894−?) to '*hikinuku*' Kajiwara (Inagaki 1981: 176). Apparently, Ōkubo was one step ahead of Kido with regard to insider information, and replied that this plan would likely be very costly, as it concerned eight people after all (ibid.).

Clearly, in terms of authorship, Kajiwara presented a coherent, desirable image. Inagaki even drew a 'composite image' of Kajiwara for a magazine, 'morphing' all eight members into one bespectacled, strong-jawed man with a moustache. Because of Yamanaka Sadao's strong impact on the scripts, nobody did object to the fact that Kajiwara looked a lot like Yamanaka (ibid.).

Groups, however, 'communist', 'collective, 'equal' etc. they might be, seem to rely on key members. Yamanaka clearly was one of those, and his untimely death contributed to the end of the Narutaki gumi, just like Ogawa Pro dissolved soon after Ogawa's Shinsuke's early death at the age of fifty-five, on 7 February 1992 (Nornes 2007: xv). Famously and tragically, Yamanaka received his 'read note' (*aka gami,* draft card) after the premiere of his *Humanity and Paper Balloons* on 25 August 1937. Like his friend and mentor Ozu Yasujirō, he was sent to the front in China, where he passed away of a bowel infection on 17 September 1938. However, it was also the move of various group members from Kyoto to several Tokyo Studios (Yamanaka and Takizawa had changed to P.C.L.) and the problems encountered by their idiosyncratic take on the nation's past in the context of increasing wartime propaganda that changed the conditions under which their collaboration had thriven.

Compared to more obvious, 'classic' instances of collective filmmaking, the Narutaki group and their work appears far less educational or, indeed, radical. Their approach clearly centered on making entertaining films, but they also reflected and commented on contemporary conditions. Their very last film *The Night Before* (Sono zenya, 1939), already produced within the Tōhō Block, however, moves their work towards the more radical: The remaining seven members turned Yamanaka's final draft, titled *Kiyamachi Sanjō* into a Kajiwara screenplay. Their memorial film for Yamanaka, directed by his disciple Hagiwara, premiered on 21 October 1939, and is a 'forceful indictment of the devastating effects of war and nationalistic fanaticism on the average man, who, in the face of the absurdity of violence, is reduced to apathy or victimhood' (Jacoby and Nordström 2017). A reviewer for the *Kinema Junpō* wrote that 'the film's Yamanaka-like darkness left the viewer with nothing but despair'(cited in ibid.), reflecting the circumstances of the film's coming into being. It is in this way that the Narutaki films also spoke to the current conditions, eloquently in their taking up contemporary aesthetics and sensibilities in their layering of past and present. But they left us with much more than 'despair', and their legacy to the Japanese cinema must not be underestimated, as will be the focus of this project's further stages.

Iris Haukamp
Tokyo University of Foreign Studies

Works Cited

Anderson, Joseph L. and Donald Richie. 1982. *The Japanese Film: Art and Industry*. Princeton, N.J: Princeton University Press.

Aoki, Tamotsu. 1999. *Gendai nihon bunka ron (7): Taishū bunka to masumedia*. Tokyo. Iwanami Shobo.

Brandon, J. R. (2003). 'Kabuki and the War of Greater East Asia, 1931−1945. *Mime Journal*: 18−39.

Gerow, Nornes and Iwasaki. 2018. *Nihon senzen eigaronshū: eigariron no saihakken*. Tokyo: Yumani shobo.

Guerra, Armand. 'A note on the Ucce Cooperative', in Richard Porton (ed.), *Arena One: Anarchist Film & Video*, Oakland, CA: PM Press: 9−11.

Hasumi, Shigehiko 1985. *Eiga ha ikani shite shinu ka*. Tokyo: Firumu Āto sha.

High, Peter B. *The Imperial Screen: Japanese Film Culture in the Fifteen Years' War, 1931−1945*. Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 2003.

Inagaki, Hiroshi. 1981. *Hige to chonmage: ikiteiru eigashi*. Tokyo: Chūō kōron sha.

Inagaki, Hiroshi. 1983. *Nihon eiga no wakaki hibi. Tokyo*: Chūō kōron sha.
Ishiwari, Osamu, Toshiro Maruo, and Yukinori Yokoyama. 2002. *Nikkatsu jidaigeki*. Tokyo: Waizu Shuppan.
Ishiwari, Osamu, Toshiro Maruo, and Hojji Tani, eds. 2005. *Hajime ni kigeki ariki : Shimizu Hiroshi, Ozu Yasujirō, Naruse Mikio, Yamanaka Sadao, Itami Mansaku soshite Saito Torajiro*. Tokyo: Waizu Shuppan.
Itami, Mansaku. 1961 [1933]. 'Jidai eiga no sonzairiyū ni tsuite.' in Shiga Naoya (ed.) *Itami Mansaku zenshū* Vol. 1: 25−31. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1961 (original publication: *Asahi Shinbun* serialised April 20−22 & 25−26,1933).
Itami, Mansaku. 1961 [1936]. 'Eiga kai tejika no mondai.' in Shiga Naoya (ed.) *Itami Mansaku zenshū* Vol. 1: 72−83. Tokyo: Chikuma Shobō, 1961 (original publication: Kaizō, August 1936).
Iwasaki, Akira. 1961. *Eigashi*. Tokyo: Tōkyō Keizai Shinpōsha.
Jacoby, Alexander. *A Critical Handbook of Japanese Film Directors: From the Silent Era to the Present Day*. Berkeley, Calif.: Stone Bridge Press, 2008.
Jacoby, Alexander and Johan Nordström. 2017. 'Sono zenya'. *Il Cinema Ritrovato*. Available online: https://festival.ilcinemaritrovato.it/en/proiezione/sono-zenya/ (accessed 29 February 2020).
Jarry, Eric. 2009. 'The Cinema Du People Cooperative Venture', in Richard Porton (ed.), *Arena One: Anarchist Film & Video*, Oakland, CA: PM Press: 1−7.
Katō, Tai. 2008. *Eiga kantoku Yamanaka Sadao*. Tokyo: Kinema Junpōsha.
Körber-Abe, Sven. 2010. 'Japans Filmanfänge - Teil 2: Industrie und staatlicher Einfluß.' *OAG Notizen* 6: 10−48.
Kuwabara, Yoshihiro. 2007. 'Itami Mansaku to Yamanaka Sadao no kigekikan.' *Aesthetics Review* 22 1−16.
Nakamura, Umenosuke. 2013. *Zenshin-za no hachijū nen*. Tokyo: Asahi Shinbun Shuppan.
Nakayama, Namida. 2011. *Asakusa geinin: Enoken, Roppa, Kinchan, Takeshi, Asakusa Eingei 150 nenshi*. Tokyo: Mynavi.
Nornes, Abé Markus. 2003. *Japanese Documentary Film: The Meiji Era Through Hiroshima*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Nornes, Markus. 2007. *Forest of Pressure: Ogawa Shinsuke and Postwar Japanese Documentary*. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.
Phelps, David. 2012. 'A brief history of radical film collectives from the 1960s to the 80s: Interview with Federico Rossin on the retrospective 'United We Stand, Divided We Fall', *Cinema Comparat/ive Cinema* 1(1): 100−107
Phillips, Alastair and Julian Stringer (eds). 2007. *Japanese Cinema: Texts and Contexts*. New York: Routledge.
Powell, Brian. 2002. 'Communist kabuki: A contradiction in terms?', in Samuel Leiter (ed.) *A Kabuki Reader: History and Performance*, 167−85. Armonk, N.Y.: M.E. Sharpe, 2002.
Rayns, Tony. 2010. 'The Only Son: Japan, 1936', *Criterion Collections*, Available online https://www.criterion.com/current/posts/1511-the-only-son-japan-1936 (accessed 2 February 2020)
Richie, Donald. 2005. *A Hundred Years of Japanese Film*. New York: Kodansha, 2005.
Sazaki, Mitsuzō. 1929. *Umon torimonochō*. Tokyo: Dai nihon yūben kodansha.
Sharp, Jasper. 2011. *Historical Dictionary of Japanese Cinema*. Lanham: Scarecrow Press.
Schiller, Friedrich. 1781. *Die Räuber*. (First performance: 13 January 1782)
Shutsū, Akio and Tetsurō Nagata. 2008 *Nihon gekieiga somokuroku: Meiji 32-nen kara Shōwa 20-nen made*. Tokyo: Nichigai Asoshietsu, Hatsubaimoto Kinokuniya Shoten.
Spalding, Lisa. 1992. 'Period films in the prewar era.' in Arthur Nolletti, and David Desser (eds) *Reframing Japanese Cinema: Authorship, Genre, History*, 131−44. Bloomington: Indiana University Press.
Standish, Isolde. 2005. *A New History of Japanese Cinema*. London: Continuum.
Sugibayahi, Takashi. 2003. *Shōwa senjiki no nihon eiga kantoku to eizō hyōgen*. Tokyo: Chōei sha.
Thornton, Sybil Anne. 2008. *The Japanese Period Film: A Critical Analysis*. Jefferson, N.C.: McFarland.
Tomita, Mika, ed. 1997. *Chie Puro jidai: Kataoka Chiezō, Inagaki Hiroshi, Itami Mansaku: shadatsu ni, entāteinmento*. Tokyo: Firumu Ātosha.
Wilson, Sandra. 2002.*The Manchurian Crisis and Japanese Society, 1931−33*. New York: Routledge.
Yamada, Kōichi. 2005. *Nani ga eiga o hashiraseru no ka*. Tokyo: Sōshisha.

Yamamoto, Kikuo.1980. *Amerika eiga to jiyū shugi jidai: Yamamoto Sadao no matatabi mono o megutte*. Firumu sentā 59: 33−40.
Yomiuri Shinbun. 1936a. 'Rengō eiga sha'. 19 May 1936: 5.
Yomiuri Shinbun. 1936b. 'Sensen mata ijō: shihon hyakumanen no shineiga kaisha-Takarazuka no Kobayashi-shi ga shinShutsū'. 7 June 1936: 7.
Yoshimoto, Mitsuhiro. 2000. *Kurosawa: Film Studies and Japanese Cinema*. Durham: Duke University Press.
Zenshin-za. 2001. 'Zenshin-za no rekishi'. Available online: http://www.zenshinza.com/infomration/rekishi/history.html (accessed 25 December 2019) [citing Zenshin-za. 2001. *Gurafu zenshin-za: sōritsu nanajū shūnen kinen*].

Films

Crisis Time Japan (Hijōji Nippon). 1933. Kondō Iyokichi. Mainichi.
Danshichi in the Rain (Danchichi shigure). 1931. Koshi Eiichi. Dai nippon jiyū eiga purodakushon.
Days of Youth (Gakusei romansu: wakaki hi). 1929. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
Dreams of Youth (Wakado no Yume). 1931. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
Dragnet Girl (Hijōsen no onna). 1933. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
Genius Scriptwriter Kajiwara Kinpachi (Tensai kyakuhonka Kajiwara Kinpachi). 2014. Ukita Nao. Jidai geki senmon channeru.
Humanity and Paper Balloons (Ninjō kami fusen). 1937. Yamanaka Sadao. Shōchiku?
I Was Born But (Umarete was mita keredo) 1932. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
It Happened One Night. 1934. Frank Capra. Columbia Pictures.
Jirocho of Shimizu (Shimizu Jirōchō). 1935. Ikeda Tomiyasu. Uzumasa Hassei Eiga.
Passing Fancy (Dekigokoro). 1933. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
The Neighbor's Wife and Mine (Madamu to nyōbō). 1931. Gosho Heinosuke. Shōchiku.
The Night Before (Sono zenya). 1938. Hagiwara Ryō. Tōhō.
Priest of Darkness (Kōchiyama Sōshun). 1936. Yamanaka Sadao. Nikkatsu (Uzumasa hassei eiga).
Rashomon (Rashōmon). 1950. Kurosawa Akira. Daiei.
Samurai Shifters (Hikkoshi Daimyō!). 2019. Inudō Isshin. Shōchiku.
Tokyo Chorus (Tokyo no kōrasu). 1931. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
Tokyo Story (Tokyo monogatari). 1953. Ozu Yasujirō, Shōchiku.
Twilight Samurai (Tasogare Seibei). 2002. Yamada Yōji. Shōchiku.
University is a Nice Place (Daigaku yoi toko). 1936. Ozu Yasujirō. Shōchiku Kamata.
Village Tattooed Man (Machi no irezumi mono). 1935. Yamanaka Sadao. Nikkatsu Kyoto.